

ROUNDUP

Deal seals Foster's fruit fly 'feast'

BRAD COLLIS



(Left to right) Do Van Thanh (deputy managing director, CPC), Nguyen Van Trung (managing director, CPC), Mal Skelly (Australian Consul-General), Nguyen Huu Chi (chairman of Tien Giang Province), Jake Jacob (managing director, Foster's Vietnam), Misha Coleman (ACIAR Country Manager Vietnam), Dr Nguyen Minh Chau (director, SOFRI), Dr Nguyen Van Bo (vice-president, VAAS) and Dr S. Vijaysegaran (Griffith University).

The commercialisation of a new, environmentally safe fruit fly bait developed from spent brewing yeast was marked by a ceremony at the Foster's Vietnam brewery near Ho Chi Minh City in May.

The SOFRI Protein bait is being commercialised by the Cantho Pesticide Company (CPC) and represents the culmination of an important ACIAR-supported project that opens the way for Vietnamese farmers to fully develop their fledgling

fruit-growing industry.

The Vietnam Government began encouraging traditional rice farmers to diversify into tropical fruit trees in the mid-1990s as a way of introducing higher-value agricultural enterprises in poor rural areas. However, from the moment the first orchards started bearing fruit in the late 1990s, farmers suffered heavy losses to fruit flies.

The challenge was taken up by researchers from Queensland's Griffith University, in particular

Dr S. Vijaysegaran and Professor Dick Drew, who encouraged the Foster's Group to also become involved by processing and supplying the waste yeast, which is the basis of the bait.

Collaborating researchers at the South Vietnam Fruit Research Institute (SOFRI) helped develop the final formula that creates a bait and pesticide for control of the specific pest species.

The work was also sponsored by the Crawford Fund, AusAID and industry. ◀

Policy Advisory Council gets a wide-ranging tour

The Policy Advisory Council of ACIAR recently toured rural New South Wales on field visits as part of the annual council meeting in Australia. The program began in Canberra with a formal council meeting and a dinner with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer.

The Council is the prime advisory mechanism for the minister, the board of management and ACIAR on international agricultural research and development collaboration. Partner country council members and representatives at the meeting included Dr Patricio Faylon (Philippines), Mr Jia Jingdun (China), Dr Nguyen Van Bo (Vietnam) and Dr Agus Muharam (Indonesia).

Members provide input on country research priorities and strategic issues for the Annual Operating Plan and the Corporate Plan 2006–10.

After its Canberra visit, the council travelled to Wagga Wagga and Orange in the heart of rural NSW for a two-day field trip. The itinerary included visits to the newly established EH Graham Centre for Agricultural Innovation, Charles Sturt University and the NSW Department of Primary



(Left to right) Mr Peter Core, Dr Patricio Faylon and Mr Jia Jingdun learn the finer points about Australian fish going under the hammer at the Sydney Fish Market.

Industries (Orange Agricultural Institute).

Council members met with project leaders, Australian research providers and stakeholders.

Members also travelled through the Blue

Mountains World Heritage area and completed the visit in Sydney with a cool but lively dawn tour of the Sydney Fish Market auctions and Sydney Aquarium.

ACIAR's shop window to the world: www.aciar.gov.au

Our biggest and most visible 'shop window' – profiling our projects and the way we do business in developing countries – is the ACIAR website.

ACIAR's website is designed to be information-rich, useable and highly accessible to both local and developing partner country visitors. The structure and content of the site caters for environments with low bandwidth and ever-increasing audiences for e-communications.

Visit the ACIAR website to:

- ▶ read about the latest agricultural research advances in bilateral and multilateral projects;
- ▶ learn about ACIAR's 13 research program areas and managers:
 - ▶ Agricultural Development Policy
 - ▶ Animal Health
 - ▶ Agricultural Systems and Economics Management
 - ▶ Crop Improvement and Management

- ▶ Crop Protection
- ▶ Fisheries
- ▶ Forestry
- ▶ Horticulture
- ▶ Land and Water
- ▶ Livestock Production Systems
- ▶ Policy Linkages and Impact Assessment
- ▶ Smallholder Farming Systems
- ▶ Soil Management and Crop Nutrition;
- ▶ find out about ACIAR's current country strategies, indicative research priorities and focus areas;
- ▶ read about the recent launch of the Aid White Paper and *Pacific 2020: challenges and opportunities for growth*;
- ▶ learn how to participate in ACIAR's projects;
- ▶ read about ACIAR's Australian partner organisations;
- ▶ find out about our overseas partner organisations operating under the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) framework;
- ▶ check out our training programs available to partner country scientists involved with ACIAR projects to obtain postgraduate qualifications at Australian tertiary institutions;
- ▶ sign up to our consultants register;
- ▶ check out the latest news from CGIAR and International Centres;
- ▶ download or go shopping for the latest publications at our online bookshop;
- ▶ subscribe to ACIAR's scientific and corporate publications online;
- ▶ check out our news stories and upcoming events; and
- ▶ find out about the AusAID-funded Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program.

ROUNDUP

Australian Volunteers International seeking specialists for Eritrea Project

Australian Volunteers International (AVI) is seeking two agricultural specialists to work on a dryland forage project in Eritrea. The 'Forage Options for Livestock' project is funded by the Australian Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry, partnered by Charles Sturt University, the University of Adelaide, Rural Solutions SA and the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

AVI is supporting the project with two key specialist placements aimed at enhancing its effectiveness and developing the sustainable agriculture sector in Eritrea.

One assignment is for a higher education adviser to work with the Hamelmo College of Agriculture to advise on strengthening the academic, research and development areas of the college and to teach farm management, livestock production and/or other agriculture-related areas. The other assignment is for a technical officer to work within the National Agricultural Research Institute to link Australian and Eritrean expertise in forage evaluation and support the experimental and training components of the project.

For further information, contact Renee Archer, 03 9279 1757, rarcher@australianvolunteers.com or visit www.australianvolunteers.com

Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development program

As part of the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) scheme, five young people will leave Australia this month to undertake short-term assignments to help with international development activities in Asia-Pacific partner countries.

The AYAD scheme is an AusAID-funded program that places skilled young Australians between the ages of 18 and 30 in a development project opportunity in a partner country. Placements are either sponsored by the private sector, NGOs or government sectors through an assignment from that organisation. For Intake 17, ACIAR is providing assignments for five youth ambassadors to work on projects in Tibet, China, Indonesia, East Timor* and Vietnam.

The Prime Minister announced the AYAD program in August 2004. The youth ambassadors exchange skills and knowledge with local counterparts to strengthen the capacity of overseas partner organisations. They have the opportunity to forge friendships and associations, which in turn strengthen the people-to-people links so important to cultural understanding and strong foreign relations.

* On indefinite hold.

Australian Youth Ambassadors (left to right) Samantha Grover (Tibet ARI, China), Sharon Harvey (ACIAR education and training project officer), Rebecca Bolt (Gansu, China), Violet Rish (East Timor), Michael Rose (Vietnam) and Fiona Goss (Indonesia) meet with John Skerritt, ACIAR deputy director R&D programs in May.



NEWLY COMMENCED PROJECTS

ASEM/2004/047	Sustainable management of coffee green scales in Papua New Guinea
CP/2004/048	Integrated disease management (IDM) for anthracnose, Phytophthora blight and whitefly-transmitted geminiviruses in chilli pepper in Indonesia
FIS/2005/176	Masterclass – aquatic animal health
FST/2005/054	Seed distribution of Australian trees – limited extension
FST/2005/180	Laos teak/non-timber forest products agroforestry scoping study
FST/2006/015	Kupang Workshop 2006
HORT/2006/006	Development of an embryo culture manual and an embryo transplantation technique for coconut germplasm movement and seedling production of elite coconut types
LPS/2005/052	The development of cattle and buffalo breeding strategies and activities based on BREEDPLAN in Thailand
ASEM/2005/002	Community Agricultural Technology Program (CATP)
ASEM/2005/126	Sweet potato workshop, Papua New Guinea
SMCN/2002/100	Water harvesting and better cropping systems for the benefit of small farmers in watersheds of the East India Plateau
SMCN/2005/059	Modelling water and solute processes and scenarios for optimisation of permanent raised bed systems in China, India, Pakistan and Indonesia

NEW PUBLICATIONS Monographs

Planters and their components: types, attributes, functional requirements, classification and description

The planting operation is one of the most important cultural practices associated with crop production. Planters are simple farm equipment that can improve resource-conserving cropping systems. Farmers can benefit from information on availability, attributes and performance of equipment. This manual provides guidance to the agronomic requirement for plant establishment and the implications for planter selection and management. ACIAR Monograph 121, \$35.00 GST inclusive (plus postage and handling).

EXTRACT

Why is a planter needed for crop establishment? What are the implications for a planter's performance?

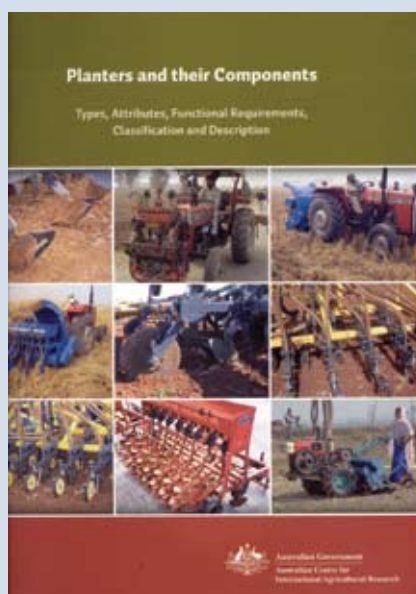
It is important to outline that crop establishment is the sequence of events that includes seed germination, seedling emergence and development to the stage where the seedlings could grow to maturity. The variables influencing plant establishment are:

- ▶ seed/species characteristics;
- ▶ external physical, chemical and biotic environment; and
- ▶ management practices (irrigation, fertiliser application, pesticide application).

The consequences of sub-optimal crop establishment on farm profitability include:

- ▶ yield reductions;
- ▶ replanting costs;
- ▶ forgone sowing opportunities;
- ▶ reduced weed suppression; and
- ▶ direct and indirect effects of secondary germination.

In crop production systems, establishment potential is dependent on the conditions prevailing immediately before planting and weather influences during the establishment period. The planting machinery is usually critically important in crop establishment as it can modify the pre-existing seed and soil conditions and dictate seed placement within the seedbed. The manual provides information on planters' performances in order to assist farmers with the selection, setting and management of all farm machinery needed to successfully establish crops over the range of conditions likely to exist at planting. A planter will perform all functions (furrow opening, seed metering and distribution, seed coverage and seedbed firming) when sub-optimal crop establishment conditions exist at the time of planting. This manual provides a guidance on the types of devices used to accomplish all functional requirements and their relative attributes for crop establishment.



Technical Reports

Pest and disease incursions: risks, threats and management in Papua New Guinea

This approach includes reports from several projects on plant protection and provides a comprehensive picture of pests and diseases of horticulture crops, damage caused by the plant pests and diseases and developing strategies to manage them. The series of papers were presented at the 2nd Papua New Guinea Plant Protection Conference held in Kokopo, East New Britain Province, in November 2004. This technical report brings together all scientists engaged in plant protection in Papua New Guinea to share their knowledge and experience in solving plant protection problems in the country and neighbouring Pacific countries. ACIAR Technical Report 62, \$22.00 GST inclusive (plus postage and handling).

EXTRACT

What are the risks associated with incursions of plant pests and what actions can be taken to manage risks and threats associated with them?

It is important to outline some of the risks associated with incursion of plant pests, which include the human-mediated pathways such as:

- ▶ the deliberate movement of plant material;
- ▶ movement of people; and
- ▶ non-plant commodities plant.

Threats usually arise from lack of management of the risks related to limited control of the movement of material, people and goods into and within a country (particularly from infected areas). Incursions are unpredictable but actions can be simple (a system where people inform others of where things are happening) or involve extensive and intensive communication and control methods, which are all everyone's business. This approach outlines the main risks, threats and management practices to prevent the entry of pests, such as surveillance and monitoring, which are significant components of managing incursions.

The papers in this report also describe the main pests and diseases of horticulture crops, their incidence and distribution, such as for example the sugarcane pathogens, the *Oribius* weevil and the red-banded mango caterpillar, the damage caused by the weevil and treatments to exclude adult weevils from some plants. The report also addresses the development of management strategies against the invasive weed *Chromolaena*, such as the release and establishment at many sites of a new biocontrol agent, a stem galling fly.



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fax: +61 2 6217 0501; email: comms@aciar.gov.au if you believe you are eligible to obtain a complimentary copy. Other people may purchase copies from our website (www.aciar.gov.au) or freely download them as pdf files.

Sales enquiries should be directed to: National Mail & Marketing, tel. +61 2 6269 1055; email: aciar@nationalmailing.com.au

ACIAR'S VISION

ACIAR looks to a world where poverty has been reduced and the livelihoods of many improved through more productive and sustainable agriculture emerging from collaborative international research.



The Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) operates as part of Australia's international development cooperation program, with a mission to achieve more productive and sustainable agricultural systems, for the benefit of developing countries and Australia. ACIAR commissions collaborative research between Australian and developing country researchers in areas where Australia has special research competence. It also administers Australia's contribution to the International Agricultural Research Centres.